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Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "Newsroom" (2007). *Newsroom*. 133.
<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/newsroom/133>

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Feed the Mosasaur food and cooking festival scheduled for March 3

FEBRUARY 23, 2007

People who take their eating seriously are invited to bring a healthy appetite to a food and cooking extravaganza that will benefit the Georgia Southern Museum.

The second annual Feed the Mosasaur Festival will be held on Saturday, March 3, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. in the Nessmith-Lane Continuing Education Building on the campus of Georgia Southern University in Statesboro.

Deriving its name from the Mosasaur a 78-million-year-old fossil skeleton that dominates the Museum's Hall of Natural History the festival will feature samples from more than 20 of the region's most popular restaurants.

In addition, there will be an amateur baking contest for adults and children, a signature dish competition for professional food-service providers, a series of specialized cooking classes, a bake sale, and activities for the kids.

'This event will have something to offer everyone who enjoys cooking and eating,' said Kelly Tharp, the chair of the Feed the Mosasaur Festival committee. 'If you like to eat, you can taste the most delicious dishes in southeast Georgia, and if you like to cook, you can show off your skills and most treasured recipes in the amateur bake-off.'

The vast array of food and drink in the exhibit hall will include samples from Barberito's, Blue Moon Cafe, Braswell Food Company, Coca-Cola, Ellis Meats, Flat Creek Lodge, French Quarter Cafe, Gnat's Landing, Holiday's Greek and Italian Restaurant, K'Bob Kelly's, Longhorn Steakhouse, McAlister's Deli, Midtown Coffeehouse, Moe's Southwest Grill, Papa John's Pizza, Robbins Smokehouse, Shane's Ribshack, Sugar Magnolia Bakery, Tastefully Simple, Traditions Bakery and Cafe, Vandy's, and Wiseguys.

Meanwhile, Tupperware, the Botanical Garden, the University Store, and the Zach S. Henderson Library will have displays in the exhibit hall.

Also, John Mulherin and David Beaubien the hosts of the 'Chillin' and Grillin' with John and Dave' show that appears on local cable TV will demonstrate some of their favorite recipes.

Admission for the Feed the Mosasaur Festival is \$9 per person for adults and \$7.50 per person for senior citizens, students and children. Kids under the age of 3 will be admitted free.

All proceeds from the festival will be used to support the Museum's many educational exhibits and programs.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for people to have fun and support a worthy cause at the same time," said Wendy Denton, the assistant director of the Museum. "For the price of admission, they can feast on an incredibly wide variety of food and check out some cool vendors. There will be lots of stuff for the kids to do, too."

The Best Bites Bake-Off is open to amateur chefs of all ages. Adults can compete in categories for bread, cakes, cookies and bars, and pies. There will also be a dessert competition for children in the 4-9 and 10-14 age groups.

First-place winners in the bake-off will be presented with a festival T-shirt. The top three entries in each category will receive a ribbon and be published in the 2008 edition of the official "Feed the Mosasaur Cookbook."

Anyone who wishes to enter the bake-off must deliver their entries between 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. The judging will take place between 10:30 and noon. There is no entry fee for the Best Bites Bake-Off, but all entries will be placed in a bake sale to benefit the Museum.

The Cooking With Class Institutes are a series of 50-minute classes that will focus on specific dishes. There are still openings in the classes for Cajun cooking, cake decorating, high tea, Indian cooking, introductory wine appreciation, romantic desserts, tapas, and wild-game cooking. There are also classes designed especially for children.

The fee for each cooking class ranges from \$10 to \$25, and advance registration is required.

The Best Bites Signature Dish Competition for restaurants and caterers will feature separate categories for appetizers, Asian food, barbeque, bread, dessert, entrees, fried chicken, Mexican food, and pizza.

Judging for the Best Bites Signature Dish Competition will be held on Monday, Feb. 26, and the winners will be announced at the festival.

There are a limited number of tickets remaining for the Feed the Mosasaur Festival gourmet dinner that will be held on the evening of Friday, March 2. Dubbed Cuisine Cum Laude, the five-course meal will feature French food, wine and cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and live music.

Tickets for the dinner are \$75 per person, or \$400 for a six-person table. Reservations will be accepted through Monday, Feb. 26.

The Nessmith-Lane Continuing Education Building is located on the Georgia Southern campus at the corner of Chandler Road and Plant Drive. For more information on the Feed the Mosasaur Festival,

or to register for the gourmet dinner or any of the cooking classes, visit <http://ceps.georgiasouthern.edu/museum/ftm/> , email jhendrix@georgiasouthern.edu or call (912) 681-5993.

Planetarium will host Astronomy and Space Day on March 3

FEBRUARY 23, 2007

Experienced star-gazers and people who have never even looked through a telescope are invited to attend a celebration of the heavens sponsored by Georgia Southern University's Department of Physics.

The annual Astronomy and Space Day will be held on Saturday, March 3, from 4 p.m. until 8 p.m. at the Georgia Southern Planetarium.

Free and open to the public, the festivities will include instruction on how to find specific planets and stars in the night sky, the presentation of a fascinating new video from NASA, and a display of moon rocks collected by the Apollo missions.

'We want to bring the wonders and excitement of astronomy and space exploration to people of all ages throughout the community,' said Becky Lowder, the assistant director of the planetarium.

'Everyone from adults to small children will find something that will help them gain a better understanding of the universe.'

Adding to the excitement of this year's event is a total lunar eclipse, which will be in progress when the moon rises at approximately 6:22 p.m.

'A total lunar eclipse occurs when the moon passes into the shadow of the Earth as the moon, the Earth and the sun are aligned,' Lowder explained. 'The rays of sunlight are bent around the edge of the Earth and filtered through our atmosphere, and that turns the moon a shade of red.'

Astronomy and Space Day will feature hands-on demonstrations and a display of different kinds of telescopes. Members of the Department of Physics and the Statesboro Astronomy Club will be on hand to share their expertise with visitors, who can view sunspots during the day, and Saturn, Venus and the Orion Nebula at night.

Meanwhile, the planetarium will present its popular 'star shows' at 4, 5, 6 and 7 p.m. Visitors will be given maps of the sky and the moon that will enable them to 'star hop' and locate planets and constellations from their own backyards.

'Cosmic Collisions' will be shown between each 'star show.' Narrated by Robert Redford, this breathtaking program contains amazing images from space and stunning visualizations which reveal the explosive encounters that shaped the solar system.

In addition, visitors can enjoy 'ViewSpace,' a multimedia production of the Space Telescope Science Institute, which is the home of the Hubble Telescope. 'ViewSpace' portrays the beauty and wonder of the universe while providing a deeper understanding of astronomy.

Also, children and their parents can work together to create and decorate their own paper 'air rockets,' which they can launch and take home.

'With all of these activities, it's going to be a spectacular afternoon and evening under the stars as we have fun exploring astronomy and space exploration,' Lowder said.

The Georgia Southern Planetarium is housed on the first floor of the Math/Physics Building, which is located across Herty Drive from Hanner Fieldhouse.

For more information, visit <http://cost.georgiasouthern.edu/planetarium> or call (912) 681-5292.